

MARSHFIELD DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD

Meeting Minutes • Thursday, July 11, 2013 • 7:00 p.m., Old School House Common

Present for the meeting were DRB members Paul Brierre, James Arisman, Les Snow, Michael Schumacher and Vince Feeney. Also present was the Zoning Administrator, Bob Light. Interested parties in attendance were Dennis Ross and Angella Gibbons.

The first application reviewed by the DRB was from Lee Grutchfield and Merrick Hamilton who own two contiguous parcels of land, one of 11.4 acres and one of 35.2 acres on Hollister Hill. Applicants want to redraw the exiting boundary line between the two lots so that one lot has 14.1 acres and the other lot has 32.5 acres. Merrick Hamilton, who was present (Lee Grutchfield was not present) at the hearing, testified that all abutters had been notified of this hearing and notification posted.

The ZA spoke in favor of the redrawing of the boundary line as proposed as it would make the boundaries of both lots more regular which is in keeping with the overall intent of the zoning regulations. Merrick Hamilton noted that while there is a dwelling on one lot no additional development is currently being planned for the second lot. There was little discussion on the application.

The second application reviewed by the DRB was a request by Tom and Susannah Blachly of Ennis Hill Road to hold "house concerts" in the upstairs 26 x 26 room in their garage. Susannah testified that they had already been holding these concerts, about one a month for the past year. They do not charge a fee for these concerts, although a donation is requested, and the donated funds go to the performers. The room is also used to rehearse plays that are performed elsewhere. The Blachlys testified that they envisioned about one concert performance a month. They further testified that the absolute maximum that the space would allow would be 50 people, combined performers and audience.

The zoning administrator testified that he had checked with the town attorney and that the Blachly's proposed use was a commercial use as money would exchange hands and thus required conditional use approval from the DRB. The ZA's principal concern in this application was the question of parking as heretofore some cars attending these concerts have been parking on the side of the roadway and presenting a hazard. The ZA said that according to the regulations one parking space must be provided for every 5 persons in the building, thus 10 spaces would be needed to accommodate the projected 50 person maximum occupancy.

Neighbors Angella Gibbons and Dennis Ross testified that their objection to the conditional use was not based on any noise issue, but rather solely on the number of cars parked both on and off the road for the "house concerts" and play rehearsals. Dennis Ross said he has had to walk around cars to get up the road, and also that there is a safety issue as cars coming up the Calais Road and taking a right onto the Ennis Hill Road can't see the cars parked on the Ennis Hill Road until they are suddenly in their way. The ZA mentioned that the Marshfield Fire Department has expressed concerns about blockage on Ennis Hill Road due to the number of cars parked on the roadway.

Michael Schumacher noted that the designation of the garage space as a commercial use triggers numerous state permitting requirements.

The Blachlys testified that drinking alcoholic beverages at their concerts was not encouraged but if people wanted to bring their own they could do so. They testified that no electric music would be performed there, only acoustic.

Angella Gibbons questioned the issue of play rehearsals as she said that in the past it seemed as if there were numerous cars parked at the Blachly property 2 or 3 times a week.

Vince Feeney moved that the minutes of the June 13, 2013 DRB meeting be approved. Seconded by James Arisman. Motion passed unanimously.

The DRB went in to closed session at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Vince Feeney

Final
Approved April 10, 2014